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NAVAL POSTGRADUATE SCHOOL

MONTEREY, CALIFORNIA

THESIS

**ANALYSIS OF SECURITY SECTOR REFORM IN POST-
CONFLICT SIERRA LEONE: A COMPARISON OF
CURRENT VERSUS HISTORICAL CAPABILITIES**

by

Patrick W. Skora

March 2010

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**ANALYSIS OF SECURITY SECTOR REFORM IN POST-CONFLICT SIERRA
LEONE: A COMPARISON OF CURRENT VERSUS HISTORICAL
CAPABILITIES**

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Submitted in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the degree of

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(MIDDLE EAST, SOUTH ASIA, SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA)**

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**NAVAL POSTGRADUATE SCHOOL
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ABSTRACT

Security Sector Reform (SSR) is a holistic approach to nation building that focuses on building strong police, military and justice systems that adhere to the rule of law and have a firm commitment to operating under democratically elected civilian governance. The British effort in conducting SSR is, to date, the most comprehensive effort that has been conducted. While UK and international involvement remains high in Sierra Leone, the security sector has operated independently since the removal of the last UN peacekeepers in late 2005. In order to assess the effectiveness of the SSR programs, this paper compares the current capabilities of the Sierra Leone security sector with those it had in the 1970s, before the country began its slide into civil war.

Overall, this thesis finds that the current state of the security sector is comparable to that of the 1970s, with some exceptions. While the military has added the capability to participate in UN peacekeeping missions, overall the gains remain tentative and a lack of capacity is hampering the effectiveness of the police and justice sector, threatening the gains that have been made. These findings suggest that SSR, as conducted in Sierra Leone, has not been successful as envisioned and the results have been comparable to those of more traditional programs.

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LIST OF ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

AFRC	Armed Forces Revolutionary Council
AI	Amnesty International
APC	All People's Congress
AU	Africa Union
DFID	Department for International Development
DPKO	UN Department of Peacekeeping Operations
ECOWAS	Economic Community of West African States
ECOMOG	ECOWAS Monitoring Group
ESF	ECOWAS Standby Force
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GSU	General Services Unit
IMATT	International Military Advisory and Training Team
ISU	Internal Security Unit
MACP	Military Aid to Civil Power
MOD	Ministry of Defense
NEC	National Electoral Commission
NRC	National Reform Council
NSC	National Security Council
ONS	Office of National Security
ONUC	UN Mission to the Congo
PMDC	People's Movement for Democratic Change
RUF	Revolutionary United Front
RSLAF	Republic of Sierra Leone Armed Forces
SL-MOD	Sierra Leone Ministry of Defense
SLPP	Sierra Leone People's Party
STTT	Short-term Training Teams
SLA	Army of Sierra Leone
SLP	Sierra Leone Police
SSR	Security Sector Reform
UK	United Kingdom

UN	United Nations
UNAMID	United Nations- African Union Mission in Darfur
UNAMISL	United Nations Mission in Sierra Leone
UNDP	United Nations Development Program
UNIOSIL	United Nations Integrated Office in Sierra Leone
UNMIL	United Nations Mission in Liberia
UNPOL	UN Police

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I. INTRODUCTION

A. INTRODUCTION

Over the last decade, western governments have undertaken security sector reform programs (SSR) in post-conflict failed states, going beyond traditional post-conflict reconstruction to attempt to strengthen states and democratic regimes in an effort to bolster long-term security. SSR focuses on a wide range of security related projects, such as building institutions and security organizations that provide democratic control, public accountability, strong judicial systems, as well as vetting and training military and police forces that will focus on serving and protecting the public good.¹ The United Kingdom's (UK) Department for International Development (DFID) defines SSR as:

The transformation of the security system which includes all the actors, their roles, responsibilities and actions, so that it is managed and operated in a manner that is more consistent with democratic norms and sound principles of good governance, and thus contributes to a well-functioning security framework. Responsible and accountable security forces reduce the risk of conflict, provide security for citizens and create the right environment for sustainable development. The overall objective of security sector reform is to contribute to a secure environment that is conducive to development.²

SSR has become the preferred method for promoting security and development as a combined package, and is thus a centerpiece of U.S. and European aid programs in post-

¹ Rita Abrahamsen and Michael C. Williams, "Security Sector Reform: Bringing the Private In." *Conflict, Security & Development* 6, no. 1, April 2006, 1–23; Louise Andersen, *Post-Conflict Security Sector Reform and the Challenge of Ownership: The Case of Liberia*. Danish Institute International Studies, 2006; Neil Cooper and Michael Pugh, *Security-Sector Transformation in Post-Conflict Societies*. Plymouth: International Studies Centre, University of Plymouth, 2002, 55; Stephanie Jean, "Security-Sector Reform and Development: An African Perspective" *Security Dialogue* 36, no. 2 (2005): 249–253; David Law, "Conclusion: Security Sector (Re)Construction in Post-Conflict Settings," *International Peacekeeping* 13, no. 1 (March 2006), 111–123; Herbert Wulf, "Security Sector Reform in Developing and Transitional Countries," in *Security Sector Reform: Potentials and Challenges for Conflict Transformation*, Edited by Clem McCartney, Martina Fischer and Oliver Wils. Berlin: Berghof Research Center for Constructive Conflict Management, 2004; J. Shola Omotola, "Beyond Transition: Challenges of Security Sector Reform and Reconstruction in Liberia," *Journal of Security Sector Management* 4, 4, November 2006; James Dobbins, *Europe's Role in Nation-Building: From the Balkans to the Congo*. Santa Monica, CA: RAND Corporation, 2008.

² Quoted in Wulf, 3.

conflict societies.³ Evaluating its effectiveness is thus critically important to maximizing the efficiency of donor resources, and their benefits to post-conflict societies.

The first SSR program was implemented by the UK in Sierra Leone, in support of a broader UN peacekeeping mission, in the aftermath of a decade long civil war in which state institutions, including the entire security sector, were destroyed. The UK initially became involved in SSR in Sierra Leone following the 1996 elections, with a specific focus on police reform.⁴ However, the kidnapping of UN peacekeepers and the rebel threat to Freetown in 2000 resulted in the UK entering Sierra Leone with a large force, including a carrier strike group and amphibious ready group. Following this intervention, the UK drastically increased its goals for SSR in Sierra Leone and began an intensive training program for the Sierra Leone military, along with institution building in the entire justice sector and Ministry of Defense (MOD).

The UK worked with the UN, but not under its control. Using a multi-agency approach, DFID coordinated with other UK and international agencies.⁵ As the vanguard of the UK intervention, a successful start at rebuilding the SLP and justice sector was important to show that SSR could be a viable approach to rebuilding war-torn states. A strong police force was necessary to maintain internal security and allow the armed forces to focus on external threats. In this sector, more than with the Republic of Sierra Leone Armed Forces (RSLAF), the UK took a multi-lateral approach using the UN, international donors, UNPOL and the Red Cross. In addition to manning, training and equipping the Sierra Leone Police (SLP), UK and international efforts focused on developing “supporting mechanisms” such as a police charter and a strong judicial system to maintain the reforms and to create a stable, effective force. To this end the UK, UN Development Program (UNDP) and Red Cross provided funds to build prisons and courts and train justices of the peace. Additionally, DFID sponsored a Justice Sector

³ Daniel Bendix and Ruth Stanley, *Security Sector Reform in Africa: The Practice and Promise of a New Donor Approach*. ACCORD. Occasional Paper Series: Volume 3, Number 2, 2008, 10.

⁴ Osman Gbla, "Security Sector Reform Under International Tutelage in Sierra Leone." *International Peacekeeping* 13, no. 1 (March 2006), 81.

⁵ Osman Gbla, *Security Sector Reform in Sierra Leone*. Pretoria: Institute for Security Studies (2007), 24–25.

Development Program to promote access to legal services and protection to Sierra Leonean citizens, including funding per diem for justices to travel and provide services in the provinces.⁶ Also involved in legitimizing the police was the writing of a Police Charter and the formation of the Community Relations Department and Complaint, Investigations and Discipline Department to combat corruption and foster a sense of public confidence.⁷

Defense sector reform, for both the MOD and RSLAF, became a priority during the British military intervention in 2000. The International Military Advisory and Training Team (IMATT), comprised primarily of UK soldiers with contributions from other Commonwealth nations and advisors from several other countries, including the United States, was tasked with training the RSLAF.⁸ IMATT took over the role of the Short Term Training Teams (STTT) and had the tasks of:

- Manning, training and equipping the Sierra Leone Army, Navy and Air Force.([These] tasks [were] done by both IMATT and UK units)
- Structural and Institutional Reform of the Sierra Leone Armed Forces: Training organization, command structure, and other vital support structures.
- Embedding in RSLAF units combating the RUF.⁹

The UK also worked in conjunction with the UN to build civilian control, transparency and oversight of the SL-MOD, to provide funding, training and sponsored classes in Britain for civil servants.¹⁰ As part of this effort, all government agencies are now supposed to have transparent budgets, and both the police and MOD provide twice-weekly press briefings.¹¹

⁶ A. M. Fitz-Gerald, *Security Sector Reform in Sierra Leone*. Shrivenham, GFN-SSR. 8–10. Osman Gbla. "Security Sector Reform Under International Tutelage in Sierra Leone." 86–88.

⁷ Gbla, *Security Sector Reform in Sierra Leone*. 27.

⁸ Sierra Leone Country Assessment, Country Information & Policy Unit, Immigration & Nationality Directorate, United Kingdom Home Office. October 2001, 22.

⁹ Jonathon P. Riley, "The U.K. in Sierra Leone: A Post-Conflict Operation Success?" Heritage Foundation, Heritage Lecture #958, 2006. Accessed at <http://www.heritage.org/Research/Africa/hl958.cfm> 2006.

¹⁰ Ibid.

¹¹ Gbla, "Security Sector Reform Under International Tutelage in Sierra Leone." 90.

Although the UK ended the military intervention in 2002, it has committed to providing approximately 100 active duty military trainers through 2010, along with continued support to the justice sector.¹² The UN Mission in Sierra Leone (UNAMSIL) completed its mandate and withdrew at the end of 2005.¹³ With the withdrawal of the UN peacekeepers and the majority of the UK trainers, Sierra Leone became, and remains, the only nation to have completed such a comprehensive SSR program. While British officials estimate that it will take “10 to 50 years of international involvement” to build a lasting framework of security and development in Sierra Leone, the removal of the UN peacekeepers and drawdown of the British trainers signify the end of intense international focus on building the security sector.¹⁴ With the SSR program roughly a decade old, how effective has it been to date in transforming the security system? How does the current state of the security sector compare to its state in the pre-conflict years?

While there is a growing body of research on SSR in general and in Sierra Leone in particular, much of it is impressionistic, lacking systematic analysis of empirical evidence.¹⁵ The literature is characterized by a debate, largely between international SSR implementers and Sierra Leonean academics. Gbla and Fayemi argue that SSR was

¹² James Dobbins, *Europe's Role in Nation-Building: From the Balkans to the Congo*; Andrew Dorman, "The British Experience of Low-Intensity Conflict in Sierra Leone," *Defense & Security Analysis* 23:2, 191; "Sierra Leone-International Relations. Sierra Leone: Country Profile." United Kingdom Foreign and Commonwealth Office. February 25, 2009. <http://www.fco.gov.uk/en/about-the-fco/country-profiles/sub-saharan-africa/sierra-leone/?profile=intRelations&pg=4> (accessed September 14, 2009); United Kingdom Foreign and Commonwealth Office. <http://ukinsierrealeone.fco.gov.uk/en/working-with-sierra-leone-1/justice>. (accessed September 15, 2009).

¹³ United Nations (2008), *Twenty-seventh report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Mission in Sierra Leone*. New York, New York: United Nations, 2008.

¹⁴ David Keen, "Greedy Elites, Dwindling Resources, Alienated Youths, The Anatomy of Protracted Violence in Sierra Leone." *International Politics and Society* (February 2003). <http://library.fes.de/pdf-files/ipg/ipg-2003-2/artkeen.pdf> (accessed February 21, 2010).

¹⁵ Rita Abrahamsen and Michael C. Williams, "Security Sector Reform: Bringing the Private in.", 1–23; Peter Albrecht and Paul Jackson, eds. *Security System Transformation in Sierra Leone, 1997–2007*, Jackson and Albrecht, eds. Birmingham, UK: GFN-SSR, February 2009; Louise Andersen. *Post-Conflict Security Sector Reform and the Challenge of Ownership: The Case of Liberia*. Danish Institute International Studies, 2006 Neil Cooper and Michael Pugh. *Security-Sector Transformation in Post-Conflict Societies*. Plymouth: International Studies Centre, University of Plymouth, 2002, 55; Stephanie Jean. "Security-Sector Reform And Development: An African Perspective" *Security Dialogue* 36, no. 2 (2005): 249–253; David Law. "Conclusion: Security Sector (Re)Construction in Post-Conflict Settings," *International Peacekeeping* 13, no. 1, March 2006: 111–123.; Herbert Wulf. "Security Sector Reform in Developing and Transitional Countries; James Dobbins. *Europe's Role in Nation-Building: From the Balkans to the Congo*.

weakened by being too donor driven, not encouraging sufficient Sierra Leonean ownership of its new security institutions or regional participation in reconstruction.¹⁶ Albrecht and Jackson maintain that UK advisors played a dual role of both instilling local confidence in new recruits and insuring the political independence of the reformed security institutions. In other words, foreign intervention was an enabler rather than an obstacle to local ownership of the security sector.¹⁷

The debate also applies to specific achievements of SSR. Dobbins credits it with effectively retraining the Sierra Leone military to assist UN peacekeepers deployed in the country, and he finds that the army has shown signs of increased professionalism and discipline. As an example, he notes that infighting, which had been common in the army before SSR, had ceased by 2005.¹⁸ Albrecht and Jackson suggest that reform of the Ministry of Defense has improved civilian management of the RSLAF, and that the input of the RSLAF into the Defense White Paper shows effective cooperation between civilian and military managers.¹⁹ However, Gbla suggests that RSLAF training places too much emphasis on combat readiness and not enough on regaining the public's trust, limiting progress on the SSR goal of building democratic governance. Fayemi contends that the large force size of the RSLAF, organization and equipment likely weakens both the performance of the military and democratic civilian control by placing unsustainable fiscal demands on the government.²⁰

There is very little research on police reform, although Kondeh and Gbla have argued that SSR programs have contributed to notable improvements in the police. They credit the UK with taking the lead in producing a new police charter for Sierra Leone that

¹⁶ Gbla. *Security Sector Reform in Sierra Leone*. Pretoria: Institute for Security Studies, 2007, 86–88; J. Kayode Fayemi. *Governing Insecurity in Post-Conflict States: The Case of Sierra Leone and Liberia*. Geneva: Centre for the Democratization of the Armed Forces, 2004: 23–27

¹⁷ *Security System Transformation in Sierra Leone, 1997–2007*, 180.

¹⁸ Dobbins, *Europe's Role in Nation-Building: From the Balkans to the Congo*.

¹⁹ *Security System Transformation in Sierra Leone, 1997–2007*, Jackson and Albrecht, eds. Birmingham, UK: GFN-SSR, February 2009: 145.

²⁰ J. Kode Fayemi, *Governing Insecurity in Post-Conflict States: The Case of Sierra Leone and Liberia*; Osman Gbla. *Security Sector Reform in Sierra Leone*; Osman Gbla. "Security Sector Reform Under International Tutelage in Sierra Leone." 78–93; Jonathon P. Riley. "The U.K. in Sierra Leone: A Post-Conflict Operation Success?"

laid the groundwork for a police force that supports human rights and the rule of law, as well as recognizing the police for a training program that focuses on the same.²¹ The judicial sector is similarly understudied. Research suggests only that efforts in the judicial sector have been less effective than with the police and military. Gbla, Fayemi and Albrecht and Jackson agree that judicial reform has lagged other aspects of SSR, and has yet to be evaluated.²²

While the existing research provides some clues as to the effectiveness of SSR overall and its constituent parts, and Albrecht and Jackson make a comprehensive analysis of the various reform programs, there has been no effort to establish whether the security sector has now surpassed its pre-conflict capabilities. This thesis will begin to fill that gap. It evaluates the change in capacity, capabilities and professionalism of the court system, police and military from pre-conflict to current levels. Because SSR's holistic approach to security is what sets it apart from traditional post-conflict security building, it is most appropriate to assess it with these broad measures. The initial hypothesis is that SSR has been moderately successful in building a functioning security sector, and as a result the security sector in Sierra Leone is now more capable than it was in the pre-conflict decades.

The thesis uses a within case comparison across time to examine the effects of SSR programs on security sector institutions. Police capabilities will be evaluated through their performance during the national elections of 2007 in comparison to their performance in the national elections of 1967. Election security is a challenging task for police, and thus a good test of their capabilities. The withdrawal of UNAMSIL peacekeepers at the end of 2005 meant that the Sierra Leone police were charged with

²¹ Al Hassan Kondeh, "Sierra Leone," in *Challenges of Security Sector Governance in West Africa*, ed. Alan Bryden, Boubacar N'Diaye and 'Funmi Olonisakin, 283–304. Geneva: DCAF, 2008; Osman Gbla, *Security Sector Reform Under International Tutelage in Sierra Leone*, 78–93

²² *Security System Transformation in Sierra Leone, 1997–2007*, Jackson and Albrecht, eds, 131–135; Al Hassan Kondeh. "Sierra Leone," in *Challenges of Security Sector Governance in West Africa*, ed. Alan Bryden, Boubacar N'Diaye and 'Funmi Olonisakin, 283–304. Geneva: DCAF, 2008: 297; Nicole Ball, et al. *Security and Justice Sector Reform Programming in Africa*. London and Glasgow: DFID, 2007; J. Kode Fayemi, *Governing Insecurity in Post-Conflict States: The Case of Sierra Leone and Liberia*; Osman Gbla. "Security Sector Reform Under International Tutelage in Sierra Leone," 18; Osman Gbla, *Security Sector Reform in Sierra Reform*. Pretoria: Institute for Security Studies, 2007, 28.

maintaining election security, with support from the RSLAF. Additionally, the police will be assessed through their ability to conduct policing, such as crime control, anti-smuggling and illegal mining. These provide direct comparisons over time, as all three have been and remain serious issues in Sierra Leone.

The military will be assessed based on its abilities to contribute to and participate in regional military exercises and peacekeeping deployments, defend territorial sovereignty, and its ability to provide support to the government and police as required. Foreign deployments would show that the government has confidence in the ability of the police to maintain domestic security in the absence of army units. Additionally, the ability to deploy in support of regional and international operations would help to show that the military has added this capability in comparison to the 1970s, when a paucity of UN peacekeeping missions meant that the military was not actively involved in international deployments. The military contributed to joint police-military operations against urban crime and smuggling in both periods, and these efforts will also be assessed and compared. In addition to the above, this paper will look for indications of military professionalism, such as firm commitment to civilian rule. These lend direct comparisons to the activities of the military in the 1970s when numerous coups and coup attempts placed the army as a direct threat to civilian rule. How effectively does Sierra Leone conduct and prosecute investigations? Are there significant amount of political interference in the justice sector, or are judges able to act within the rule of law? Is access to the justice system available to all citizens, within a reasonable timeframe, or is there a large and growing backlog of cases? There is evidence of heavy political interference in the 1970s, leading to politically motivated imprisonments and trials, as well as an overall lack of court officials to prosecute criminal cases. If SSR has been effective, present day courts will have the judges, lawyers and court officials to prosecute cases in a reasonable timeframe and to assert their independence against political influence.

If my hypothesis is correct, the performance of the security sector should be better now than in the pre-conflict period, given the lofty goals of SSR. The analysis relies largely upon primary sources, including local media and international news

organizations, UN and foreign donor reports, such as Amnesty International and Transparency International for the current period and secondary sources for the pre-conflict period. Chapter II evaluates the effectiveness of the Sierra Leonean security sector in the 1970s. Chapter III evaluates current state of the security sector. Chapter IV undertakes a comparative analysis across time to evaluate the effectiveness of SSR in Sierra Leone, and discusses the implications for SSR projects elsewhere.

II. THE PRE-CONFLICT ERA

A. INTRODUCTION

In an attempt to provide a baseline from which to judge the improvement or lack thereof in the police, military, and judicial systems as a result of SSR this chapter evaluates the state of the Sierra Leone security sector in the 1970s, after the post-colonial security sector had settled into place but before the slide to war began in the 1980s. It will show that the pre-war military was a glorified police force, largely due to a lack of foreign threats and peacekeeping deployments, which freely intervened in the political process. The police had capacity problems in dealing with widespread crime and smuggling but were generally professional. Finally, the justice system also faced capacity shortfalls, as well as interference from an executive that sought, largely successfully, to limit its powers. In the absence of SSR programs, the post-conflict security sector would likely have returned to this *status quo ante* best.

Britain founded Sierra Leone in 1787 as a colony for freed slaves. It named the capital Freetown and Krios, descendants of the returned slaves, coalesced into the colony's elite.²³ The country gained independence in 1961, remaining a member of the British Commonwealth until 1971 when it declared itself a republic.²⁴ Two main political parties emerged in the transition to independent statehood, the All People's Congress (APC) and the Sierra Leone People's Party (SLPP).²⁵ These parties continue to dominate the political scene today. The first Prime Minister, SLPP leader Sir Milton Margai, passed away in 1964 and was succeeded by his brother, Sir Albert Margai.²⁶ Albert Margai viewed himself as a progressive leader of a class of young professional

²³ Michael Chege, "Sierra Leone: The State that Came Back from the Dead," *Washington Quarterly* 25, no. 3 (2002): 148–149; Irving Kaplan, *Area Handbook for Sierra Leone* (Washington: U.S. GPO, 1976), 18–19.

²⁴ *Ibid.*, vii–viii.

²⁵ Fred M. Hayward, "Political Leadership, Power, and the State: Generalizations from the Case of Sierra Leone," *African Studies Review* 27, no. 3 (September 1984): 11.

²⁶ Arnold Hughes and Roy May, "The Politics of Succession in Black Africa," *Third World Quarterly* 10, no. 1 (1988): 11.

Africans dedicated to state building, economic development and industrialization.²⁷ However, along with centralizing power, his tenure was marked by growing corruption and economic difficulties. In an ominous sign, by the mid-1960s the country had switched from a net-exporter to a net-importer of rice, one of its staple foods.²⁸ Margai failed in his effort to make Sierra Leone a single-party state, and then lost the first post-independence elections to the APC.²⁹ Government attempts to muzzle opposition party newspapers and other media outlets in the run-up to the 1967 election were ruled illegal by the courts and APC candidates were subsequently able to campaign relatively freely.³⁰ Although the SLPP sought the backing of the military in the electoral process, the elections were basically free and fair.³¹

The APC would remain in power until the onset of the civil war in the early 1990s. However, the period of its rule was characterized by threats of military intrusion into governmental affairs and an ongoing struggle by civilian governments to maintain supremacy over the military. The military onslaught was immediate. Brigadier David Lansana, Chief of the Sierra Leone Army (SLA), staged a coup on March 21, 1967 in support of Margai and to prevent the APC President-elect Siaka Stevens from assuming power. Lansana's coup was reversed two days later by a counter-coup by a group of army and police officers, who formed a military government, the National Reformation Council (NRC), sending Stevens into exile in Guinea.³² The NRC remained in power for approximately one year, before being overthrown in a the third coup, this one led by enlisted soldiers, which facilitated Stevens accession as head of state with an APC

²⁷ Hayward, "Political Leadership, Power, and the State: Generalizations from the Case of Sierra Leone," 21–23.

²⁸ A. Zack-Williams, "Sierra Leone: Crisis and Despair," *Review of African Political Economy* 49 (Winter 1990): 23.

²⁹ Hayward, "Political Leadership, Power, and the State: Generalizations from the Case of Sierra Leone," 24.

³⁰ Ahmed R. Dumbuya and Fred M. Hayward, "Changing Electoral Patterns in Sierra Leone: The 1982 Single-Party Elections," *African Studies Review* 28, no. 4 (December 1985): 64–65.

³¹ Thomas S. Cox, *Civil-military relations in Sierra Leone: A case study of African soldiers in politics* (Cambridge, Mass: Harvard UP, 1976), 105–115; Sierra Leone, *Report of the Dove-Edwin Commission of Inquiry into the Conduct of the 1967 General Elections in Sierra Leone and the Government statement thereon* (Freetown: Government Printer, 1967), 11; Ahmed R. Dumbuya and Fred M. Hayward, "Changing Electoral Patterns in Sierra Leone: The 1982 Single-Party Elections," 65.

³² Kaplan, *Area Handbook for Sierra Leone*, 38–39.

dominated government.³³ The Stevens government was initially popular among both the masses and the educated elite. However, this popularity faded as Stevens consolidated power by disrupting rivals and co-opting former SLPP officials.³⁴ Stevens took a number of steps to insulate himself from threats military threats after coup attempts in 1970 and 1971. He signed a defense pact with neighboring Guinea, brought 200–300 Guinean soldiers to Freetown to serve as his personal guard, appointed Colonel Joseph Saidu Momoh, an ethnic Limba like himself, to command the army, and doubled spending on the military in an effort to buy loyalty.³⁵ These tactics kept Sierra Leone coup-free for the next three decades.

B. MILITARY

The primary mission of the SLA was to “protect the country from foreign encroachment,”³⁶ but Sierra Leone faced no external threats. In the colonial period, the SLA had been used largely for maintaining internal order,³⁷ but also had performed well in the Second World War. According to the commander of the 81st West African Division:

The courage of the Sierra Leoneans was never doubted, but there was a natural speculation as to how they would be able to withstand so difficult an ordeal which had sorely tried some of the Empire’s most experienced troops. There need have been no speculation. From start to finish in the depths of the Arakan hill jungles, the Sierra Leone Regiment proved its worth, determined in defence, relentless in attack, always cheerful, individually brave, they bore themselves as veterans.³⁸

³³ John R. Cartwright, *Political leadership in Sierra Leone* (Toronto: University of Toronto P, 1978), 82–84.

³⁴ Hayward, "Political Leadership, Power, and the State: Generalizations from the Case of Sierra Leone," *African Studies Review* 27, no. 3 (September 1984): 25–26; William Reno, *Corruption and state politics in Sierra Leone* (Cambridge [England]: Cambridge UP, 1995), 79.

³⁵ Kaplan, *Area Handbook for Sierra Leone*, 338.

³⁶ *Ibid.*, 339.

³⁷ Thomas S. Cox, *Civil-military relations in Sierra Leone: A case study of African soldiers in politics*, 30–32.

³⁸ Edward Dominic and Amadu Turay, *Sierra Leone Army: A Century of History* (London: Macmillan, 1987), 83.

The post-colonial SLA was very small, estimated at 1,360 in 1965. With approximately .06% of the population under arms and 4.9% of the federal budget (1.3% of GNP) dedicated to the military, Sierra Leone was the least militarized West African country, after The Gambia, which had no army at all before 1981.³⁹

While Sierra Leone did contribute troops to the 1961-1964 UN Operations in the Congo (ONUC) peacekeeping mission, the military still operated under largely under the leadership of British officers.⁴⁰ In May 1961, only 9 out of 54 officers were Sierra Leone nationals, transitioning to 54 out of 59 by January 1965.⁴¹ There were no external deployments after the transition was complete. The absence of both external threats and international peacekeeping missions in the 1970s meant that the SLA did not have the opportunity to demonstrate capability and capability (or lack thereof) to conduct these missions, and so these cannot be assessed.⁴² It was deployed to the southern borders in 1971 to guard against incursions by pro-SLPP mercenaries. However, Kaplan suggests that this deployment, along with manning checkpoints and civil construction, was primarily a pretext for keeping the military busy and away from the capital after the coup attempts, rather than a response to a serious threat.⁴³ Given this paucity of information, no assessment of the SLA's capability to carry out its primary missions can be made.

In practice, the primary role of the SLA in the 1970s was to support the police in suppressing internal dissent, securing the diamond mines, and patrolling the borders to control smuggling of diamonds and export crops. The mines provided almost 70% of export earnings in 1970s, when official diamond exports peaked at over 2 million carats. By 1986, official exports dropped to 48,000 carats, as the vast majority of Sierra Leone's

³⁹ Claude E. Welch, "The Dilemma of Military Withdrawal from Politics: Some Considerations from Tropical Africa," *African Studies Review* 17, no. 1 (April 1974): 217–218.

⁴⁰ United Nations Peacekeeping. "Welcome to the United Nations: It's Your World." <http://www.un.org/en/peacekeeping/pastops.shtml> (accessed February 6, 2010).

⁴¹ Edward Dominic and Amadu Turay, *Sierra Leone Army: A Century of History* (London: Macmillan, 1987), 100–101.

⁴² "United Nations Peacekeeping." "Welcome to the United Nations: It's Your World." <http://www.un.org/en/peacekeeping/pastops.shtml> (accessed February 6, 2010).

⁴³ *Ibid.*, 346.

diamonds were smuggled across the borders.⁴⁴ Illicit mining pits and transportation networks operated in public areas, such as buildings, airports and even a police station, indicating complicity of at least some military forces in smuggling, and ineffectiveness of the military overall in combating it.⁴⁵ A small cadre of approximately 100 men with two gun boats was also trained to patrol the coast to battle fish poaching.⁴⁶ Kaplan reports in 1976 that the navy seemed to remain in a perpetual state of training, although it did conduct regular patrols. With only 100 men and two 130 ton-patrol boats, the capability of the force would have been limited at best.⁴⁷

The SLA's performance in the 1967 elections was mixed. On one hand, it provided limited, but professional support to the police in maintaining order. For example, the government declared a state of emergency in Kono and the Western Area (Freetown and environs) districts in response to violent protests and called out the SLA to support the police.⁴⁸ *West Africa Weekly* reports that armed soldiers joined the police to suppress the riots, making no mention of military/police violence or related deaths, despite "armed troops with guns at shooting position," which suggests a measured and disciplined response.⁴⁹ The following week's edition notes that the riots had ended and the districts were calm in the lead up to the election.⁵⁰ The Dove-Edwin Commission report on the elections explicitly credits the army with restrained and responsible behavior in responding to pre-election violence. The report notes another instance in

⁴⁴ A. Zack-Williams, "Sierra Leone: Crisis and Despair," 24; Ian Smillie, "Getting to the heart of the matter: Sierra Leone, diamonds, and human security," *Social Justice* 27, no. 4 (December 2000): 25; "Sierra Leone," in *Africa Contemporary Record: Annual Survey and Documents 1972-1973*, ed. Colin Legum (London: Rex Collings, 1973), 729; "Sierra Leone," in *Africa Contemporary Record: Annual Survey and Documents 1974-1975*, ed. Colin Legum (London: Rex Collings, 1975), 768-769; "Sierra Leone," in *Africa Contemporary Record: Annual Survey and Documents 1976-1977*, ed. Colin Legum (London: Rex Collings, 1977), 711.

⁴⁵ Kaplan, *Area Handbook for Sierra Leone*, 338-339, 346, "Sierra Leone." *West Africa Weekly*, June 9, 1972, Dateline Africa sec; "Sierra Leone," *West Africa Weekly*, February 11, 1974, Dateline Africa sec;

⁴⁶ Ibid, 339, "Sierra Leone," in *Africa Contemporary Record: Annual Survey and Documents 1976-1977*, ed. Colin Legum (London: Rex Collings, 1977), 707.

⁴⁷ "Shanghai II (Type 062) class," in Jane's Fighting Ships, <http://nps.edu/library> (accessed February 6, 2010).

⁴⁸ Dominic and Turay, *Sierra Leone Army: A Century of History*, 118.

⁴⁹ "Sierra Leone," *West Africa Weekly*, March 18, 1967, Dateline Africa sec.

⁵⁰ "Sierra Leone," *West Africa Weekly*, March 25, 1967, Dateline Africa sec.

which a detachment came under fire and suffered casualties while attempting to suppress violence between APC and SLPP supporters. It did not return fire but demonstrated restraint and reported the matter to the police.⁵¹ On the other hand, military cohesion and professionalism were strained by the electoral exercise. As noted above, directly following the election the Lansana, NRC and “privates” coups demonstrated serious internal divisions and a lack of respect for both military hierarchy and the civil-military divide.

Overall, SLA capabilities in the 1970s were limited. The force was significantly politicized and largely ineffective. When the Revolutionary United Front (RUF) rebels invaded from Liberia in 1991, the SLA offered no significant resistance.

C. POLICE

The Sierra Leone police (SLP) were modeled after the British, were founded in 1829 with an initial cadre of 26 appointed to patrol Freetown.⁵² The size of the force grew gradually and its duties expanded. By the late 1940s, the force numbered roughly 1,000 and all police responsibilities had been extended into the countryside to replace court messenger forces. The first police training school was founded by Police Commissioner Brook in 1909 and was moved to Hastings in 1948.⁵³ At independence the police were well organized and had a set organizational structure that included ties to Interpol.⁵⁴ In addition to standard policing, their responsibilities included controlling smuggling and illegal mining. In 1975, the police to population ratio was 1:674, much higher than Ivory Coast (1:1790) or Nigeria (1:1833), but lower than Guinea (1:434).⁵⁵

⁵¹ Sierra Leone, *Report of the Dove-Edwin Commission of Inquiry into the Conduct of the 1967 General Elections in Sierra Leone and the Government statement thereon* (Freetown: Government Printer, 1967), 12–13.

⁵² Patrick Igbinovia, "The pattern of policing in Africa: The French and British connections," *Police Journal* 54, no. 2 (1981): 125–126; Irving Kaplan, *Area Handbook for Sierra Leone*, 349.

⁵³ Ibid, 350; "Chapter 2: Policing," in *Sierra Leone A Country Review Of Crime and Criminal Justice, 2008* (Praetoria: Institute for Security Studies, 2008), 2.

⁵⁴ Ibid.

⁵⁵ John P. Harlan and Charles P. McDowell, "The Role of Police in Post-Colonial Sub-Sahara Africa," *Police Studies* 4, no. 2 (Summer 1981): 26.

SLP performance in the core mission areas of criminal policing and maintenance of law and order was mixed. On one hand, several researchers rate the SLP as one of the best on the continent in the 1970s. According to Kaplan, the police force was respected, apolitical, and its “membership was a microcosm of the various ethnic, religious, and political divisions in the country.”⁵⁶ Kaplan suggests that regular contact between the police and members of the community promoted good police-civilian relations.⁵⁷ Bebler concludes that the police were “less-faction ridden and [had] better leadership” than the military. On the other hand, their effectiveness in combating crime was limited. The deployment throughout the 1970s of a joint army-police unit to assist the police against smugglers and for fighting crime in urban areas indicates the ineffectiveness of regular police units.⁵⁸ Smuggling might be seen as a problem inherently requiring the application of police and military capabilities, but urban crime certainly is not. While Sierra Leone did not keep crime statistics, violent crime was prevalent enough that in 1971 the government passed a law imposing the death penalty for any violent crime.⁵⁹ While a precise assessment is impossible, there is circumstantial evidence, such as statements by Stevens and the passing into law of the death penalty for those convicted of violent crimes, that violent crime and gang activity were on the rise.⁶⁰ The government generally used the army or other specialized units, such as the Internal Security Unit (ISU) or General Services Unit (GSU) rather than the police against demonstrators, but this is likely because those units were specifically formed for regime support.⁶¹

⁵⁶ Kaplan, *Area Handbook for Sierra Leone*, 353; “Sierra Leone,” *West Africa Weekly*, March 17, 1972, Dateline Africa sec;

⁵⁷ Ibid.

⁵⁸ Ibid.

⁵⁹ “Sierra Leone,” *West Africa Weekly*, March 17, 1972, Dateline Africa sec.

⁶⁰ Kaplan, *Area Handbook for Sierra Leone*, 348; “Sierra Leone,” *West Africa Weekly*, July 16, 1973, Dateline Africa sec; “Sierra Leone,” *West Africa Weekly*, February 35, 1974, Dateline Africa sec.

⁶¹ Amnesty International Report 1977- Sierra Leone, report (London: Amnesty International, 1977), 94; Dominic and Turay, *Sierra Leone Army a century of history*, 155, 164; Harlan and McDowell, “The Role of Police in Post-Colonial Sub-Saharan Africa,” 26; Thomas S. Cox, *Civil-military relations in Sierra Leone a case study of African soldiers in politics*, 208; George Kieh, Jr. and Pita Agbese, *The Military and Politics in Africa: From Engagement to Democratic and Constitutional Control* (Aldershot, Hants, England: Ashgate, 2004), 93–94.

The 1967 elections are a good opportunity to assess police performance, since election security necessarily involved a large number of police. As noted above, the army was occasionally called upon to assist the police in suppressing riots, suggesting that the police did not have the capability to handle serious incidents of internal unrest without support. However, there were no reports of undue violence aimed at the protesters, which also suggests that the police reacted in a professional manner.⁶² Hayward claims that the state of emergency was declared by Margai in an attempt to influence the election in his favor. Although not mentioned in the other reports, if this is true it may suggest again that police were too professional rather than too weak to conduct the desired operations.⁶³ The Dove-Edwin Commission recognized the police for ensuring registered voters were allowed to vote in areas where APC supporters attempted to prevent them from doing so. Additionally, police are credited for preserving the peace and ensure smooth voting in Kono district, where electoral violence had been feared. These positives are tempered by incidents of police interference in the election, including a alleged mishandling of ballot papers, which was reported to the police but not investigated, police involvement in the beating of one of Margai's security officers, and "unnecessarily delayed disturbances in which the Police took part."⁶⁴ Overall the elections were peaceful, with violence limited to the areas mentioned above, and there was no evidence of police lending support to either party.⁶⁵ While the police commissioner threw his support behind the NRC after the 1967 coup, the rest of the police force remained neutral.⁶⁶

⁶² "Sierra Leone," *West Africa Weekly*, March 18, 1967, Dateline Africa sec; "Sierra Leone," *West Africa Weekly*, March 25, 1967, Dateline Africa sec.

⁶³ Hayward, "Political Leadership, Power, and the State: Generalizations from the Case of Sierra Leone," *African Studies Review* 27, no. 3 (September 1984): 28–29.

⁶⁴ Sierra Leone, *Report of the Dove-Edwin Commission of Inquiry into the Conduct of the 1967 General Elections in Sierra Leone and the Government statement thereon* (Freetown: Government Printer, 1967), 12–13.

⁶⁵ "Sierra Leone," *West Africa Weekly*, March 25, 1967, Dateline Africa sec; Anton Bebler, *Military Rule in Africa* (New York: Praeger, 1973), 71–73; Kaplan, *Area Handbook for Sierra Leone* (Washington: U.S. GPO, 1976), 353.

⁶⁶ Bebler, *Military Rule in Africa*, 71–73; Kaplan, *Area Handbook for Sierra Leone*, 353.

SLP efforts to halt smuggling were largely ineffective, even when combined with the SLA support. As noted above, illegal mining and smuggling of diamonds were a growing issue for the country and the police, and the illegal activity cut across all governments successively in turn, each proving that they were unable to halt or slow its growth.⁶⁷ Although police and army officers alike were involved in illegal diamond smuggling operations granted by Stevens as patronage, their failure to implement official policy nevertheless demonstrates a lack of capability and/or professionalism.⁶⁸

Overall, police performance can be assessed as marginal. The police displayed a lack of politicalization, especially compared to the military, during the 1967 elections, and except for the Commissioner did not involve themselves in the followings coups. The formation of the ISU and GSU can be seen as government attempts to politicize the police forces. The SLP lacked the capability to combat either crime or rampant smuggling and illegal mining, and required military support to supplement their efforts.

D. JUDICIAL SYSTEM/COURTS

Like other elements of the security sector, the Sierra Leone court system was based on Anglophone traditions and English law. At independence, as part of the Commonwealth, the country had five or six levels of courts (depending on location), with the highest judicial body being the Privy Council of the House of Lords in London. In 1971, upon leaving the Commonwealth, the Sierra Leone Supreme Court became the nation's highest court.⁶⁹ In 1973, the country only had 55 lawyers registered with the bar, divided into two classes, as in the United Kingdom, with only barristers allowed to plead cases. The exact number of barristers is not known, but by definition it was less than 55. This lack of capability was in some respects compensated for by a heavy reliance on lower and customary courts for many petty offences.⁷⁰ The judicial system is

⁶⁷ "Sierra Leone," July 8, 1967 *West Africa Weekly*, Dateline Africa sec; "Sierra Leone," *West Africa Weekly*, April 27, 1968, Dateline Africa sec; "Sierra Leone," *West Africa Weekly*, April 21, 1972, Dateline Africa sec; "Sierra Leone," *West Africa Weekly*, February 11, 1974, Dateline Africa sec.

⁶⁸ William Reno, *Corruption and state politics in Sierra Leone* (Cambridge [England]: Cambridge UP, 1995), 106–107.

⁶⁹ Kaplan, *Area Handbook for Sierra Leone*, 160–170.

⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, 170–172.

even less well documented than the SLA and police, but there is sufficient information to provide a basic analysis of the effectiveness and independence of the courts in the 1970s.

The constitution of 1971 created a quasi-independent “judicial service commission” charged with appointing magistrates and court officials but not judges, which were to be appointed by the President.⁷¹ Thus, the court was nominally independent, but open to political interference through the appointment process. The courts set an early precedent of judicial independence in the lead-up to the 1967 elections, ruling in favor of APC legal challenges to SLPP party and government attempts to file libel claims, curtail free speech, and close down its newspaper.⁷² However, once demonstrated this independence was quickly reduced. Margai responded by dismissing the Chief Justice and replacing him with a political ally, Gershon Collier.⁷³ This trend was continued by Stevens, and by the middle of the 1970s the courts had been brought substantially to heel, although the judiciary strove to maintain independence where possible. The lower court judges were the most compromised. Lawyers who dealt with the courts in the 1970s reported that unless a case against APC interests was taken to the Appeals Court or the Supreme Court, in which a panel of judges could better resist political pressure, it was difficult to win.⁷⁴ Nevertheless, the courts either dropped cases or acquitted many defendants charged by the government, including those charged in the 1967 coup, suggesting a concerted effort to maintain independence. Amnesty International reports covering 1974–1977 list instances of judicial abuse, alongside fair and public trials.⁷⁵ For example, the 1974/75 report praises the public trial with defense lawyers of 15 individuals accused on treason, and acknowledges that they had access to an appeals court to fight their death sentence. The absence of criticism of the proceedings

⁷¹ Kaplan, *Area Handbook for Sierra Leone*, 171.

⁷² Dumbuya and Hayward, “Changing Electoral Patterns in Sierra Leone: The 1982 Single-Party Elections,” 64.

⁷³ Humphrey Fisher, “Elections and Coups in Sierra Leone, 1967,” *The Journal of Modern African Studies* 7, no. 4 (December 1969): 617.

⁷⁴ Hayward, “Political Leadership, Power, and the State: Generalizations from the Case of Sierra Leone,” 29–31.

⁷⁵ *Amnesty International Report 1974/75- Sierra Leone*, report (London: Amnesty International, 1975), 8.

and guilty verdict suggest that the process was perceived to have been conducted fairly. Kaplan asserts that the “internment and trial, even though the cases involved sensitive political matters, had been scrupulously correct.”⁷⁶ However, in the same report AI lists 80 individuals detained after a bombing and notes that the status of several of them remained unknown.⁷⁷ While the prisoners were arrested during a state of emergency and so were legally held without trial, the lack of accountability in the system indicates a lack of judicial capability. The 1977 AI report claims, “about 500 political prisoners were being held, 90% of whom had not been tried.”⁷⁸ The fact that the judicial system was unable or unwilling to process these cases indicates significant interference in its proceedings and/or lack of capability. Overall, the court system lacked capability to prosecute cases and was politically compromised, although it strived to maintain judicial independence.

E. CONCLUSION

The military’s ability to conduct any operations other than internal assistance to the police cannot be accessed, although it generally performed well in support to civil authorities. The police strived to maintain independence from political interference, and in the turmoil surrounding the 1967 elections and following coups, largely succeeded. However, the fact that the military was continually used as support for the police in maintaining order, suggests limited police capability and speaks against the claims that it was a strongly performing force. Similarly, the courts lacked the capability or will to process those charged and held. In addition, by the mid-1970s the police, army and courts, all worked for the APC. Thus, Sierra Leone’s security sector in the 1970s demonstrated, at best, basic levels of capability and very limited insulation from political interference in pre-civil war era.

⁷⁶ Kaplan, *Area Handbook for Sierra Leone*, 171.

⁷⁷ *Amnesty International Report 1974/75- Sierra Leone*, report (London: Amnesty International, 1975), 53–54.

⁷⁸ *Amnesty International Report 1977- Sierra Leone*. Report. (London: Amnesty International, 1977), 94–95.

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III. THE POST-CONFLICT ERA

A. INTRODUCTION

This chapter assesses the current state of the military, police and justice sector. As in the previous chapter, it will consider the military's ability to conduct operations, its conduct during the 2007 election and its police support activities. Police will be evaluated in terms of their ability to maintain laws and order, deter crime and smuggling, and maintain election security. Finally, the justice sector will be examined for signs of judicial independence, capability and capacity.

Sierra Leone began sliding toward war in the mid-1980s. The war finally broke out in 1991, when the RUF, led by former Corporal Foday Sankoh, invaded from Liberia. Some hoped the war would be brought to an end after the democratic election of Alhaji Kabbah (SLPP) in 1996. However, LT Col Johnny Paul Koroma overthrew Kabbah in 1997, establishing the Armed Forces Revolutionary Council (AFRC), and allying with the RUF.⁷⁹ The Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) immediately intervened with troops, restoring Kabbah to power. However, ECOWAS Monitoring Group (ECOMOG) forces were unable to drive the rebel forces from their enclaves, from which they continued to conduct raids and attacks.⁸⁰ In 1999, a peace agreement, the Lomé Accords, was brokered and its implementation subsequently supported by UNAMSIL, which replaced departing ECOMOG forces with over 15,000 UN peacekeepers, the largest peacekeeping force in the world at the time.⁸¹ The Lomé Accords made Sankoh Vice-President and Minister of Natural Resources, which gave

⁷⁹ "SIERRA LEONE/KOROMA," GlobalSecurity.org - Reliable Security Information, <http://www.globalsecurity.org/military/library/news/2000/05/000514-sierra1.htm> (accessed February 11, 2010).

⁸⁰ Paul Williams, "Fighting for Freetown: British Military Intervention in Sierra Leone." *Contemporary Security Policy* 22, no. 3, 2001: 147; Peter A. Dumbuya, "ECOWAS Military Intervention in Sierra Leone: Anglophone-Francophone Bipolarity or Multipolarity?" *Journal of Third World Studies* 25, no. 2 (Fall 2008): 97; Osman Gbla. "Security Sector Reform Under International Tutelage in Sierra Leone," *International Peacekeeping* 13, no. 1, March 2006: 80.

⁸¹ Adedeji Ebo, *The Challenges and Opportunities of Security Sector Reform in Post-Conflict Liberia*, 7.

him *de facto* control of the diamond fields, and gave blanket amnesty for all war crimes and human rights abuses to all involved in the war.⁸² UNAMSIL declared the war over in January 2002, oversaw elections later that year, and completed a staged withdrawal of its forces in December 2005.⁸³

B. MILITARY

Military expenditures were roughly \$40 million annually (2% of GDP) in 2006-2008.⁸⁴ This figure is significantly higher than for other countries in the region. For example, Liberia's average was approximately .5%, Ghana's .75% and Côte d'Ivoire's 1.55%, reflecting the large size of the RSLAF, second only to Nigeria.⁸⁵ Despite the large budget, the quality of life for soldiers is poor. The government of Sierra Leone and leadership of the RSLAF have a goal of reducing the force from 10,000 to 8,500 by the end of 2010 (primarily through retirement and natural attrition), and to reduce the number of housing, barracks and other facilities, reducing costs to the state and enabling the it to improve living conditions for the remaining force.⁸⁶ However, Jane's estimates that the RSLAF still musters over 10,000 soldiers.⁸⁷ This suggests that the ability of the military to conduct internal reforms is limited.

⁸² Along with Vice President, Sankoh's official title was: Chairman of the Board of the Commission for the Management of Strategic Resources and National Reconstruction and Development (CMRRD), See: Jeremy Giniifer, "The Challenge of the Security Sector and Security Reform Processes in Democratic Transitions: The Case of Sierra Leone", *Democratization*, 2006, 13: no. 5, 795.

⁸³ Chege, "Sierra Leone: The State that Came Back from the Dead," 150; Jonathon P. Riley. "The U.K. in Sierra Leone: A Post-Conflict Operation Success?" Heritage Foundation, Heritage Lecture #958, 2.

⁸⁴ "CIA-The World Factbook-- Sierra Leone," Welcome to the CIA Web Site Central Intelligence Agency. <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/sl.html> (accessed February 15, 2010).

⁸⁵ Sub-Saharan Africa: Selected World Development Indicators," In World Bank, <http://ddp-ext.worldbank.org/ext/DDPQQ/member.do?method=getMembers> (accessed February 14, 2010).

⁸⁶ "Sierra Leone," In Jane's World Armies, <http://www2.janes.com/client/nps/> (accessed January 23, 2010); "Sierra Leone- A warning to the government- The DREAM Team letter," *Sierra Herald*, February 5, 2009. <http://www.sierraherald.com/dream-team-letter.htm> (accessed January 24, 2010); United Nations., *Fifth Report of the Secretary General on the UN Integrated Office for Sierra Leone*. New York, New York: United Nations, 2007.

⁸⁷ "Regional Statistics: West Africa," In Jane's Military and Security Assessments, <http://nps.edu/library> (accessed February 14, 2010).

While Sierra Leone has historically good relations with its neighbors, during the civil war border incursions occurred on all sides. Currently, the UN Mission in Liberia (UNMIL), with over 10,000 peacekeepers helps to maintain security on the Sierra Leone-Liberian border.⁸⁸ However, Guinean troops still occupy several border areas, the most contentious being the area surrounding the village of Yenga. In 2004, Guinean President Conte disavowed Guinean claims over the territory, but the country still occupies the area. Authorities estimate that there is little threat of conflict breaking out and there have been no reports of skirmishes or standoffs between the two militaries.⁸⁹ While the threat of conflict is low, the ability of the RSLAF to defend the border in such an instance is low and would likely be overmatched by the more heavily armed Guinean forces.⁹⁰

The RSLAF deployed 160 soldiers to Darfur, as part of the UN-African Union Mission in Darfur (UNAMID) in February 2010, its first UN peacekeeping deployment since ONUC in the early 1960s.⁹¹ Sierra Leone did provide roughly 350 troops and staging bases for ECOMOG's Liberian intervention in 1990, but due to lack of command and control and logistics capabilities. The Sierra Leone contingent had exceedingly poor leadership, with its commander, Lt. Colonel Modu Hanciles, being relieved of his job in late-1990 for "cowardice and neglect of duty."⁹² To deploy with UNAMID, the RSLAF was required to meet standards of training and pass UN assessments that certify it for peacekeeping operations, as laid out by UN resolution A/RES/49/37 and the Department of Peacekeeping Operations. These requirements include training in meeting the specific

⁸⁸ "UNMIL Facts and Figures - United Nations Mission in Liberia," Welcome to the United Nations: It's Your World. <http://www.un.org/en/peacekeeping/missions/unmil/facts.shtml> (accessed February 21, 2010).

⁸⁹ "Sierra Leone-Security Assessment," Jane's Military and Security Assessments. Jan 9, 2008. <http://www.nps.edu/library> (accessed February 21, 2010).

⁹⁰ "Regional Statistics: West Africa," In Jane's Military and Security Assessments, <http://nps.edu/library> (accessed February 14, 2010).

⁹¹ Sierra Leone beefs up AU troops in Sudan," The Equatorian News Online. http://www.theequatorian.com/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=795&Itemid=330 (accessed February 21, 2010); "United Nations Peacekeeping," Welcome to the United Nations: It's Your World. <http://www.un.org/en/peacekeeping/pastops.shtml> (accessed February 06, 2010).

⁹² Lansana Gberie, "ECOMOG: The Story of an Heroic Failure." *African Affairs* 102 (2003): 147-54; Ibrahima Myabe, *ECOMOG: Strengths and Weaknesses as a Regional Security Institution*, report (Carlisle: U.S. Army War College, 2001), 2-3, 10; Ibrahim Tarawallie, "Sierra Leone: RSLAF for peacekeeping mission," *Concord Times*, December 3, 2009, <http://allafrica.com/stories/200912030516.html> (accessed January 23, 2010),

rules of engagement specified by the UN for the specific operation, rule of law, human rights, core UN peacekeeping standards and goals, and other basic training standards that validate the RSLAF's ability to conduct peacekeeping operations in conjunction with other UN forces.⁹³ The level of capacity that the UN mandates is not a certification to conduct military operations, and while the UN provides training teams the majority of a contributor's training and standards are determined internally. In the case of Sierra Leone the deployment signifies both a new capability for the RSLAF and an international understanding of the maturation of the military. Despite those positives, the deployment to the UN should not be taken as a sign of a completely self-sufficient and highly capable force. Without the continued support of IMATT and its provision of specific training and vehicles the RSLAF would likely not have been able to deploy. However, the government has expressed interest in deploying a full battalion to Darfur if the first deployment is successful, which bodes well for continuing efforts to maintain and extend the appropriate capabilities.⁹⁴

As a member of ECOWAS, the RSLAF is also a contributor to the ECOWAS Standby Force (ESF) and has committed to providing a company sized infantry unit to the brigade. It has been chosen, along with Mali, to host one of two logistics centers that will maintain stockpiles of equipment in preparation for use in ESF operations.⁹⁵ While the specific selection criteria have not been published, the selection of Sierra Leone suggests that ECOWAS has confidence in the RSLAF's ability to maintain control of dangerous material. The RSLAF participated in ECOMOG/ESF Endeavour Interoperability Exercise in July 2008. Sponsored by the U.S. military, the African

⁹³ United Nations, *A/RES/49/37*. http://www.un.org/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=A/RES/49/37 (accessed January 22, 2010). Additional information on UN peacekeeping standards, training, material and support to deploying peacekeepers may be found at the UN DPKO peacekeeping hub website: http://peacekeepingresourcehub.unlb.org/PBPS/Pages/Public/PeaceKeepingTraining.aspx?page=support&menukey=_12_4#.

⁹⁴ Ibrahim Tarawallie, "Sierra Leone: RSLAF for peacekeeping mission," *Concord Times*, December 3, 2009, <http://allafrica.com/stories/200912030516.html> (accessed January 23, 2010),

⁹⁵ ECOWAS, "Council of Ministers Approve Release of Funds for Regional Logistics Depot in Sierra Leone." Press release. ECOWAS. <http://news.ecowas.int/presseshow.php?nb=125&lang=en&annee=2009> (accessed February 15, 2010).

Union and ECOWAS, Endeavour was geared towards improving command and control and communications among states participating in the ESF.⁹⁶ This exercise included all 15 members of ECOWAS.⁹⁷

RSLAF assistance to civil authorities is delineated under the Military Aid to Civil Power (MACP) policy formulated by the Office of National Security (ONS) in 2004. The ONS is the central agency responsible for coordinating security and intelligence issues and organizations and was the primary agency responsible for coordinating security during the 2007 elections.⁹⁸ MACP divides RSLAF assistance to the SLP into two types: “standing tasks” and “emergency tasks.” A standing task is one the National Security Council (NSC) assigns to the RSLAF as a “defined operation” to assist civil authorities for an indefinite period until an NSC determination that military support is no longer needed. An emergency task is a specific request, assigned only when the SLP is unable to cope without assistance.⁹⁹ Under the MACP, the RSLAF performed well in support of civil authorities during the 2007 elections, deploying several hundred military police, upon request of the Inspector General of the Police, in support to the SLP.¹⁰⁰ These troops patrolled with police in specific high-threat areas, such as ports of Freetown, and had a stabilizing effect.¹⁰¹ The elections were free and fair, representing a great stride forward for the country, and for the security forces in general.¹⁰² While the

⁹⁶ "Sierra Leone," In Jane's World Armies, <http://www2.janes.com/client/nps/> (accessed January 23, 2010).

⁹⁷ Hassan Lai, *Regional Approach to Training Together: An ECOWAS Perspective*, issue brief, http://www.fivepages.com.au/members/iapct2009/public_html/images/Brig%20Gen%20Hassan%20Lai.pdf (accessed January 15, 2010).

⁹⁸ Albrecht and Jackson, *Security System Transformation in Sierra Leone, 1997-2007*, 143-151; Edmond Sylvester Alpha, Draft National Electoral Commission (NEC), Role of Security Agencies in the Conduct of the 2007 Presidential and Parliamentary Elections (A NEC Perspective) 2007: 8-11.

⁹⁹ Albrecht and Jackson, *Security System Transformation in Sierra Leone, 1997-2007*, 151.

¹⁰⁰ Ibrahim Tarawallie, "Sierra Leone: 360 Military Police to Boosts Security," *Concord Times*, September 9, 2007, <http://allafrica.com/stories/200709101147.html> (accessed January 23, 2010).

¹⁰¹ United Nations, Fifth Report of the Secretary General on the UN Integrated Office for *Sierra Leone*. New York, New York: United Nations, 2007: 5.

¹⁰² Edmond Sylvester Alpha, Role of Security Agencies in the Conduct of the 2007 Presidential and Parliamentary Elections: 7, 10.

RSLAF played only a supporting role to the SLP, its willingness and ability to play such a role is an indicator of some level of professionalism and capability.

However, disillusionment and politicization within the armed forces is clearly a problem, though it is impossible to determine how big of one. A January 2009 open letter to President Koroma from a group of RSLAF officers and soldiers calling themselves the Detective Reconnaissance Emergency Action Mission Team, or DREAM Team, accuses the Minister of Defense and President of favoritism and tribalism in the promotion and training of officers and “reckless neglect of the welfare of soldiers.”¹⁰³ The DREAM Team claims to be “a network of over 850 officers and men in all bases of the Sierra Leone Armed Forces cutting across tribal and political party lines [standing] for justice and order ... [and] committed to checking ... injustice and the excessive misrule that led to the bloody rebel war in Sierra Leone.”¹⁰⁴ The group asks for a political solution, but warns that if all else fails it will take matters into its own hands.¹⁰⁵ This letter is obviously disturbing, especially if the group includes anywhere near as many RSLAF members as it claims. With Sierra Leone’s history of coups and ethnic favoritism, these threats have to be taken seriously.¹⁰⁶ However, there have been no reports of subsequent action taken either against or by the “DREAM Team,” so it is difficult to determine just how serious the problems identified actually are. Jane’s 2009 assessment rates Sierra Leone a 3 out of 9 on state control of the military (with 9 being the highest rating), with an overall military stability rating of 31/100, among the lowest in the region. This data suggests that although the military was able to maintain its professionalism during and after the elections, widespread threats of politicization of the force still exist.¹⁰⁷

¹⁰³ The following citation contains the full text of the referenced letter: "Sierra Leone- A warning to the government- The DREAM Team letter," *Sierra Herald*, February 5, 2009. <http://www.sierraherald.com/dream-team-letter.htm> (accessed January 24, 2010).

¹⁰⁴ Ibid.

¹⁰⁵ Ibid.

¹⁰⁶ Yusuf Bangura, "Strategic Policy Failure and Governance in Sierra Leone," *The Journal of Modern African Studies* 38, no. 4 (December 2000): 559.

¹⁰⁷ "Regional Stability Ratings: West Africa," In Jane's Military and Security Assessments, <http://nps.edu/library> (accessed February 11, 2010).

In October 2009, the RSLAF was called upon to assist police in dealing with violent crime in the capital and provincial towns and at the Bumbuna Hydroelectric project.¹⁰⁸ The military assistance has had a positive impact on security, although incidents of armed robbery and murder persist.¹⁰⁹ There have been no reports of the military using undue force, and all accounts refer to joint police-military patrols, suggesting that the RSLAF is working within the confines of the MACP program, playing a supporting role to the police and civil authorities, and capable of supporting law enforcement efforts, as well as more martial support missions, such as riot-suppression.

The RSLAF Maritime Wing, hereafter referred to as the navy, was subsumed as a branch of the RSLAF in 2002 and now operates as a branch of the military, rather than an independent service.¹¹⁰ It received three 32-foot cutters from the United States in 2006 and ten fast attack craft and a patrol boat from China in 2006 and 2008, respectively, bringing its fleet up to 14 operational patrol craft from zero. According to Jane's, the Sierra Leone navy is "considerably effective" in combating piracy, smuggling and illegal fishing in its territorial waters, with the craft donated by China having had a considerable impact on increasing its capability to deal with piracy and smuggling.¹¹¹ This is particularly impressive for a force that only became operational in 2006. In February 2007, in its first action since before the civil war, the navy apprehended a Chinese fishing

¹⁰⁸ Press Secretariat State House, "President Koroma invokes MACP protocol as a response to spate of armed robberies." *Sierra Express Media*, October 7, 2009. <http://www.sierraexpressmedia.com/archives/586> (accessed February 14, 2010).

¹⁰⁹ Aruna Turay, "In Sierra Leone, MACP Gains Momentum in Lumley," *Awareness Times*, October 12, 2009, Local News, http://www.news.sl/drwebsite/publish/article_200513284.shtml (accessed February 14, 2010); Aruna Turay, "In Sierra Leone, Armed Robbers Kill NPA Staff." *Awareness Times*, November 10, 2009. http://www.news.sl/drwebsite/publish/article_200513605.shtml (accessed February 14, 2010); Augustine Samba, "In Sierra Leone, Curfew Order Declared," *Awareness Times*, October 28, 2009, Local News, http://www.news.sl/drwebsite/publish/article_200513481.shtml (accessed February 14, 2010).

¹¹⁰ "Sierra Leone," In Jane's World Navies, <http://www2.janes.com/client/nps/> (accessed January 23, 2010).

¹¹¹ Ibid.

trawler, after firing warning shots when the vessel refused to stop.¹¹² According to press reports and Jane's, the navy has been consistently patrolling territorial waters, and there are numerous other instances of apprehensions of illegal fishermen and fuel smugglers over the last three years.¹¹³ In September 2009 the navy responded to the site of a sinking ferry and assisted in the rescue and recovery of several dozen survivors and at least 150 corpses from the stricken vessel.¹¹⁴ Although some families of the victims criticized the slowness of the response, the navy's actions appear to have been more responsive and effective in rescue and recovery efforts than its counterparts in Cameroon (2006) and Senegal (2002). However, while the Sierra Leone navy responded more rapidly than its counterparts in the region, the delay between sinking and the arrival of rescue vessels demonstrates that the navy still suffers from a lack of capability or training to be able to rapidly respond to disasters at sea. In the September 2002 Senegalese ferry accident, over 1,800 lives were lost, including 22 French nationals.¹¹⁵ The French government filed international arrest warrants against Senegalese leaders and military officials for incompetence in mounting rescue efforts.¹¹⁶ Given that the Sierra Leone navy has only 270 personnel, 14 patrol boats, one main base and 4 forward operating

¹¹² James Knight and Katrina Manson, "Sierra Leone navy shoot to catch Chinese fishermen," *Rueters*, February 23, 2007, <http://www.reuters.com/article/idUSL23406811> (accessed January 21, 2010); Aruna Turay, "In Sierra Leone, 45,000 US Dollars Fine for Arrested Korean Vessel," *Awareness Times*, October 5, 2009, News, http://news.sl/drwebsite/publish/article_200513218.shtml (accessed January 19, 2010); "Sierra Leone navy kills four pirates after Chinese boat raid," November 28, 2008, *Times Online*, Africa News, <http://timesonline.co.uk/tol/news/world/africa/article5247721.ece> (accessed January 19, 2010).

¹¹³ Aruna Turay, "Navy arrests illegal Fuel Dealers at Sea in Sierra Leone," *Awareness Times*, July 28, 2008, News, http://news.sl/drwebsite/publish/article_20059257.shtml (accessed January 21, 2010).

¹¹⁴ "Pupils among 200 missing as boat sinks," *Dispatch Online*, September 14, 2009. <http://www.dispatch.co.za/article.aspx?id=344169> (accessed January 24, 2010); Rose Rea, "Two hundred feared dead after boat capsizes off Sierra Leone," *Telegraph.co.uk*, September 10, 2009, World News, <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/africaandindianocean/sierraleone/6168747/Two-hundred-feared-dead-after-boat-capsizes-off-Sierra-Leone.html> (accessed January 24, 2010).

¹¹⁵ David N. Tagne, "Survivors tell of fatal ferry accident," *Independent Online*, March 26, 2006, West Africa sec, "Senegal: Families demand justice for Joola ferry deaths." *Reuters AlertNet*. <http://www.alertnet.org/thenews/newsdesk/IRIN/8793439d357ca1ed6504b821e70ef584.htm> (accessed February 10, 2010); "Senegal ferry disaster probed." BBC NEWS, Africa. <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/africa/2947745.stm> (accessed February 21, 2010); *USA Today*. "127 feared dead in Cameroon ferry sinking." March 23, 2006. http://www.usatoday.com/news/world/2006-03-23-cameroon-ferry_x.htm (accessed February 10, 2010).

¹¹⁶ "Arrests sought over Senegal ferry," BBC NEWS, News Front Page. <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/africa/7613594.stm> (accessed February 21, 2010).

bases for 250 miles of coastline, its response seems to have been adequate. Overall, the accomplishments for the navy are impressive, especially given that it has been operational for only three years.¹¹⁷

Despite its successes, the RSLAF continues to be plagued by corruption and criminality. The police seizure of a military truck carrying smuggled goods in September 2008 demonstrates that RSLAF successes in this realm have to be balanced against its direct participation in smuggling.¹¹⁸ A courtroom riot led by the RSLAF officer on trial and assisted by another commissioned officer and several enlisted men in July 2007 similarly demonstrates a lack of respect for the rule of law among individual officers. While the incidence of such behaviors is impossible to determine, combined with the disgruntlement expressed in the DREAM Team letter they suggest that systemic problems remain.¹¹⁹

Successful completion of UN training and certification, along with deployment to UNAMID, is a very big step for the RSLAF, as is its integration into the ESF. The successes of the navy show that the military is capable of taking on larger, more technical tasking. However, the DREAM Team letter, substandard barracks and housing conditions, and corruption and criminality demonstrate continuing weaknesses. Politicians' efforts to promote ethnic bias and/or politicize the military would pave the way for a return to the tense civil-military relations of decades past. Even the perception of such actions is enough to seriously undermine the performance and professionalism of

¹¹⁷ As a further means of comparison, Jane's estimates that Sierra Leone navy operates more naval craft than any other in the region, barring Nigeria. While not comparable to 1st world powers, this in itself is a testament to its levels of capacity and capability and demonstrates the difficulty that 3rd world nations have in manning and maintaining sea going vessels. See: "Regional Naval Statistics: West Africa." In Jane's Military and Security Assessments, <http://nps.edu/library> (accessed February 11, 2010), "Sierra Leone." In Jane's World Navies, <http://www2.janes.com/client/nps/> (accessed January 23, 2010), Sierra Leone. CIA. *CIA World Factbook*. Langley: CIA, 2010, <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/sl.html> (accessed January 23, 2010)

¹¹⁸ Mohamed Vandi and Abraham Abdulai. "Sierra Leone: Military Vehicle Caught Smuggling Goods." *Concord Times*, September 15, 2008. <http://allafrica.com/stories/200809160135.html> (accessed January 23, 2010),

¹¹⁹ Morray Boima. "Sojas Riot in Sierra Leone." *Awareness Times*, July 30, 2008. http://news.sl/drwebsite/publish/article_20059273.shtml (accessed January 23, 2010).

the RSLAF. Finally, it is not at all clear how well the RSLAF would respond to threats along its borders, and thus its ability to perform its core mission remains a big question mark.¹²⁰

C. POLICE

The police remain largely unable to carry out their core mission—crime control. In 2006, President Kabbah announced: "Police are finding it more and more difficult, due to capacity problems, to bring culprits to book, and to stem the tide of crime and violent conduct."¹²¹ Rates of burglary and theft in the capital are very high, exacerbated by a shortage of police and staff, low pay, which encourages corruption, and lack of respect among the population, which limits police investigations. Complaints about SLP corruption and ineffectiveness are widespread.¹²² Amnesty International documents poor prison conditions and overcrowding in police stations, as well as instances of police beatings of prisoners, resulting in several deaths. It also documents police beatings of eight reporters covering SLPP and APC political meetings in 2009.¹²³ On the bright side, there is no evidence of politicization within the police. The journalists were beaten while covering both political parties, suggesting that the police are apolitical but suffer from a lack of discipline and respect for the law. The police have instituted community outreach programs, such as non-violence workshops and a youth community-policing program, in attempts to address the crime and violence throughout the country.¹²⁴ The Acting

¹²⁰ Lansana Gberie, "The Guinea–Sierra Leone border dispute: Time for ECOWAS to intervene," *Pambazuka News* 446 (September 3, 2009), <http://www.pambazuka.org/en/category/features/58462> (accessed January 24, 2010).

¹²¹ "Global donors' conference in Freetown for logistics depot." *PanaPress*. November 10, 2006. <http://www.panapress.com/news/latf.asp?code=eng005380&dte=11/10/2006> (accessed February 11, 2010).

¹²² Jeremy Ginifer, "The Challenge of the Security Sector and Security Reform Processes in Democratic Transitions: The Case of Sierra Leone," *Democratization* 13, no. 5 (December 2006): 802–804.

¹²³ Amnesty International Reports cited from 2004–2009. Full citation information for all the reports is given in the bibliography, in an attempt at brevity, only the full citation for the 2004 report is given in this footnote: Amnesty International. *Amnesty International Report 2004- Sierra Leone*. Report. <http://www.unhcr.org/refworld/docid/40b5a20114.html.html> (accessed January 19, 2010).

¹²⁴ Bampia J. Bundu, "Sierra Leone Police Trains Student on Non-violence and Conflict Management," *Awareness Times*, January 25, 2009, http://www.news.sl/drwebsite/publish/article_200512628.shtml (accessed January 20, 2010).

Inspector General of Police hopes that the community policing programs will enable the police to release the RSLAF from their assistance under the MACP.¹²⁵

However, the community outreach programs are showing little success. Police participation in local police partnership boards is sporadic and inattentive to local concerns and issues. In many areas, including parts of Freetown, the community relies on local youth to provide security patrols and for protection, independently of the police, again demonstrating the virtual absence of police capability.¹²⁶ The head of a local youth organization describes these informal policing efforts in one rural community:

There is not much crime here because this township is like a family. We know everybody and everything. If there is a fight they go to the youth group or after them the chiefs; only finally do they go to the police. There is no police post in the community of Yengema . . . We have a youth security network. We patrol at night. We respond if there is a problem. We harass anybody who brings drugs. We arrest them, destroy the drugs; we give them a beating. Solved! No more drugs!¹²⁷

The reliance on this informal structure, while it may be effective within individual communities, may very well block the development of a strong police force and the rule of law. It is also a further indicator of a lack of police reach and capability to deal with crime and other urban issues.

The formal police-youth community-policing program, begun in December 2009, will recruit 9,000 volunteers over the age of 18 to supplement police patrols in the capital, without police powers. This program is viewed as a way to respond to youth unemployment (estimated at 60%) and gang and criminal activity, while extending community policing.¹²⁸ The ‘volunteers’ are to be paid a stipend, will wear a uniform that differentiates them from the police and will not be allowed to carry “offensive” weapons. Vetting is to be done in cooperation with community elders to identify the best

¹²⁵ Adbdul Fonti, "In Sierra Leone, Police formalizes Community Groups," *Awareness Times*, November 11, 2009, Local News, http://www.news.sl/drwebsite/publish/article_200513612.shtml (accessed February 14, 2010).

¹²⁶ Bruce Baker, "Community Policing in Freetown, Sierra Leone: Foreign import or local solution?" *Journal of Intervention and Statebuilding* 2, no. 1 (March 2008): 222-234.

¹²⁷ *Ibid.*, 222.

¹²⁸ Paul Jackson, *SSR and Post-Conflict Reconstruction: Armed wing of State-building?* Conference paper (Birmingham: GFN-SSR, 2009), 11.

candidates.¹²⁹ Nevertheless, some citizens are concerned that participants will use their positions to facilitate rather than prevent criminal activity and violence.¹³⁰ If this program is administered well, it may achieve both of its goals and increase SLP credibility with the local population on the margins. However, if the volunteers are involved in bribery and crime, the opposite result is likely.

Political riots in Freetown in March 2009, led by SLPP and APC supporters, provided the largest challenge to the SLP since the 2007 elections (discussed below), and again revealed a lack of capacity. The police were unable to properly control the crowd and protect civilians in the course of the mayhem.¹³¹ The UN responded to the lack of police capacity by providing riot control equipment as well as training in crowd control procedures.¹³² Although ineffective, the police behaved professionally, apolitically and generally without undue violence. The one notable exception was the firing of dispersal shots into a crowd resulting in several deaths, after tear gas failed to dispel protesters.¹³³ Accusations of rape against APC supporters were investigated and medical examinations done before the charges were dismissed for lack of evidence. This dispensation was supported by a subsequent independent investigation. This incident nevertheless is generally seen as evidence of systemic ineffectiveness.¹³⁴

¹²⁹ "Sierra Leone police enlist youth volunteers." *BBC News*, November 20, 2009. <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/africa/8369960.stm> (accessed January 20, 2010); Lansana Fofana, "Sierra Leone: Police Plan to Use Youth Against Crime Sparks Row," *Inter Press Service*, December 18, 2009, section goes here, <http://ipsnews.net/news.asp?idnews=49743> (accessed January 20, 2010).

¹³⁰ Ibid.; Lisa Denney, "Sierra Leone: Wave of Violence or Wake-Up Call?" *Pambuzka News*, January 18, 2009, <http://allafrica.com/stories/printable/200906180968.html> (accessed January 20, 2010).

¹³¹ Rudolfo Landeros, "UNIPSIL: Training of Sierra Leone Police Personnel on Crowd Control and Rules of Engagement," United Nations Integrated Peacebuilding Office in Sierra Leone, <http://unipsil.unmissions.org/Default.aspx?tabid=2217&ctl=Details&mid=2793&ItemID=6959> (accessed February 12, 2010); Sheka Tarawallie, "SLPP rape claims were a big hoax, says Bankole Thompson Commission," *Cocorioko*, September 17, 2009, <http://www.cocorioko.net/national/1667-slpp-rape-claims-were-a-big-hoax-says-bankole-thompson-commission> (accessed January 22, 2010).

¹³² Landeros, "UNIPSIL: Training of Sierra Leone Police Personnel on Crowd Control and Rules of Engagement."

¹³³ "Sierra Leone police shootings fuel tension." *Independent Online*, September 19, 2009. http://www.iol.co.za/index.php?set_id=1&click_id=68&art_id=nw20090919203052473C938810 (accessed January 22, 2010).

¹³⁴ Denney, "Sierra Leone: Wave of Violence or Wake-Up Call?".

The SLP has been actively involved in combating drug smuggling in the country and has made several major seizures and arrests. One seizure in 2008 led to a police investigation, arrest of several foreign nationals and several dozen citizens, and the firing of the Transportation and Aviation Minister, who was implicated in the smuggling.¹³⁵ While impressive in their own right, these incidents are more of an exception than an indicator of ability to contain smuggling and drug trafficking on a daily basis. The SLP have not been successful at combating illegal mining and smuggling of diamonds. While legal exports of diamonds have risen over the last decade, reaching approximately \$141 million dollars in 2007, from the 3% royalty that diamond exporters pay to the government (approximately \$4.25 million) only \$25,000 to \$50,000 is spent on mine monitoring and the police Precious Minerals Monitoring Team.¹³⁶ The police have arrested diamond smugglers and attempted to gain better control over the diamond trade, but it is estimated that illicit diamond exports are 100% to 400% of official exports. The Peace Diamond Alliance in 2005 estimated production at \$400 million, but government figures only recorded \$142 million in exports. The International Crisis Group (ICG) has a much lower production estimate of \$200 million.¹³⁷ These figures suggest that while the police have made some notable arrests of smugglers, overall they have been ineffective at limiting the illegal flow of goods.

The SLP has a roughly 60-person contingent participating in UNAMID.¹³⁸ It was provided pre-deployment training by the UN focusing on human rights, refugees, human trafficking, sexual exploitation, HIV/AIDS and security issues as required by the UN

¹³⁵ "Sierra Leone politics: Record drug seizures sees minister lose job," *Economist Intelligence Unit ViewsWire News Analysis*, September 5, 2009, Politics (accessed January 20, 2010); Sahid V. Vandy, "Vigilant Anti-Drugs Monitoring leads to Arrest in Sierra Leone," *Awareness Times*, February 19, 2007, News, http://news.sl/drwebsite/publish/article_20054771.shtml (accessed January 22, 2010).

¹³⁶ National Advocacy Coalition On Extractives. *Sierra Leone at the crossroads: Seizing the chance to benefit from mining*. Report. http://www.nacesl.org/NACE_Sierra%20Leone.pdf (accessed February 12, 2010): 6, 10.

¹³⁷ Chaim Even-Zohar, 'Sierra Leone's presidential beneficiation visions: a reality test', Diamond Intelligence Brief, 29 November 2007 cited in: National Advocacy Coalition On Extractives. *Sierra Leone at the crossroads: Seizing the chance to benefit from mining*, p 8; *Sierra Leone: The Election Opportunity*. Africa Report No. 129. <http://www.crisisgroup.org/library/documents/africa> (accessed February 20, 2010).

¹³⁸ United Nations. *Contributors to United Nations peacekeeping operations- December 2009*. http://www.un.org/en/peacekeeping/contributors/2009/dec09_1.pdf (accessed January 22, 2010).

Department of Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO) and UN resolution A/RES/49/37.¹³⁹ This deployment suggests that the SLP, or at least one small unit of it, is developing some basic peacekeeping capabilities.

The national elections of 2007 were a major test of the capabilities and professionalism of the SLP. International observers rated the elections a qualified success. SLP was responsible for providing security for all aspects of the election, including NEC offices, campaigns, polling places and for counting and announcing of results.¹⁴⁰ A November 2006 UN assessment concluded:

The national security sector is generally functioning well. The capacity of the Sierra Leone Police to maintain law and order and discharge its security responsibilities continues to develop. Progress made in enhancing the capacity of the security sector is encouraging.

However, there is still a need to further strengthen and rationalize the security architecture of Sierra Leone, so that both the Sierra Leone Police and the Armed Forces could be sustainable in the long term, and also carry out their tasks effectively, in particular in connection with the 2007 elections.¹⁴¹

The National Electoral Commission (NEC) worked with the Office of National Security (ONS) to coordinate between the various security agencies (SLP, RSLAF and private security firms), and gave the SLP credit for the core of the work.¹⁴² During the pre-election campaigning, the police were called upon to respond to interparty violence and performed adequately. In one instance, the police successfully broke up an APC-

¹³⁹ Aruna Turay, "In Sierra Leone, 65 Police Officers For Darfur Peacekeeping Mission," *Awareness Times*, April 12, 2008, News, http://news.sl/drwebsite/publish/article_20059416.shtml (accessed January 22, 2010); United Nations. *A/RES/49/37*, http://www.un.org/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=A/RES/49/37 (accessed January 22, 2010); "United Nations Peacekeeping." Welcome to the United Nations: It's Your World. <http://www.un.org/en/peacekeeping/dpko.shtml> (accessed February 11, 2010).

¹⁴⁰ Edmond Sylvester Alpha. *Role Of Security Agencies In The Conduct Of the 2007 Presidential and Parliamentary Elections*, 10.

¹⁴¹ United Nations. *Third Report of the Secretary General on the UN Integrated Office for Sierra Leone*, November 28, 2006. Quoted from: Brian Thomson. 'Sierra Leone: Reform or Relapse? Conflict and Governance Reform.' 2007. Chatham House, London

¹⁴² Edmond Sylvester Alpha. *Role Of Security Agencies In The Conduct Of the 2007 Presidential and Parliamentary Elections*, 9–10.

SLPP standoff in the capital that had disrupted the city for several days.¹⁴³ It was a positive sign that the SLP could handle the majority of the security requirements. Although RSLAF provided assistance for patrolling Freetown and other high-threat areas, it remained a supporting role.¹⁴⁴ It responded to incidents of violence, such as post-election riots at the SLPP headquarters, during which tear gas was fired into the crowd, breaking up the demonstration and enabling besieged SLPP supporters to escape the area.¹⁴⁵

The SLP was hampered somewhat by high-level political interference. “Senior Police Officers who chose to strongly collaborate with NEC to ensure transparent, free and fair elections were constantly transferred to prevent them from playing a professional role while others were threatened with demotion.”¹⁴⁶ In addition, both political parties used young ex-combatants to support their campaign efforts, and maintaining control over them was a major concern for the SLP. Some of the youth who worked as “securities” for the parties reported that they did so to evade arrest by the police for their criminal activities. This suggests that the police were effective in maintaining law and order—among those without political protection. Both parties pressured police for the release of supporters arrested in violent demonstrations and criminal activity.¹⁴⁷ Although at times this did lead to the release of political party supporters, both UN and the NEC reports state that overall police were largely able to resist this pressure.¹⁴⁸

According to the NEC, “the SLP maintained its professional integrity and supported the NEC at all costs. ... [T]he SLP have been particularly outstanding for their

¹⁴³ Jimmy D. Kande, “Rogue incumbents, donor assistance and Sierra Leone’s second post-conflict elections of 2007,” *Journal of Modern Africa Studies* 46, no. 4 (2008): 617.

¹⁴⁴ United Nations. Fifth Report of the Secretary General on the UN Integrated Office for *Sierra Leone*. New York, New York: United Nations, 2007.

¹⁴⁵ Maya M. Christensen and Mats Utas, “Mercenaries of Democracy: The ‘Politricks’ or Remobilized Combatants in the 2007 General Elections, Sierra Leone,” *African Affairs* 107, no. 429 (September 17, 2008): 537.

¹⁴⁶ Edmond Sylvester Alpha. Role of Security Agencies in the Conduct of the 2007 Presidential and Parliamentary Elections, 10.

¹⁴⁷ Christensen and Utas, “Mercenaries of Democracy: The ‘Politricks’ or Remobilized Combatants in the 2007 General Elections, Sierra Leone.” 524–525.

¹⁴⁸ Ibid.; United Nations. Fifth Report of the Secretary General on the UN Integrated Office for *Sierra Leone*. New York, New York: United Nations, 2007.

distinguished display of professionalism amidst attempts of political interference and bribery.”¹⁴⁹ The Amnesty International 2008 report also notes few violations in elections that were held largely according to national laws and international standards.¹⁵⁰ Thus, the 2007 election stands out as the SLP’s brightest moment to date. Indeed, for one voter it was a major turning point. Although concerned about violence, Mari-ama Koroma went to the polls on election day to register her vote. Upon arrival she found a calm orderly scene with police officers maintaining order and assisting with ballots. Expecting to have to pay a bribe to vote, she offered a policeman 10,000 leones (\$3.40), several day’s average wages, which he refused. “He told me very clearly that he would accept nothing...I think the police have changed. They are our police now.”¹⁵¹

D. JUDICIAL SECTOR/ COURTS

Sierra Leone continues to operate under a bifurcated legal system that is divided into the formal system, based both on English common law, and informal customary law. The formal sector is currently comprised of the Supreme Court, Court of Appeals and the High Court of Justice, and 12 local magistrate courts, among which 5 of the magistrates rotate. The informal sector is comprised of 315 local courts, which apply customary law, presided over by local chairmen who consult with formal sector court officials.¹⁵² Customary law is also implemented by paramount chiefs, which although not recognized in the constitution comprise the most accessible part of the justice sector for the majority of Sierra Leoneans.¹⁵³ Local courts and chiefs manage approximately 85% of civil

¹⁴⁹ Edmond Sylvester Alpha. Role Of Security Agencies In The Conduct Of the 2007 Presidential and Parliamentary Elections, 10.

¹⁵⁰ *Amnesty International report 2005- Sierra Leone*; Amnesty International. *Amnesty International report 2007- Sierra Leone*.

¹⁵¹ Quoted in: United Kingdom. Department for International Development. UKAID. *Development in the Republic of Sierra Leone 2009-2012- Country Plan*. London: DFID, 2008, 11.

¹⁵² Edward Sawyer, "Remove or Reform? A Case for (Restructuring) Chiefdom Governance in Post-Conflict Sierra Leone," *African Affairs* 107, no. 428 (2008): 393–395; "Sierra Leone (12/09)." U.S. Department of State. <http://www.state.gov/r/pa/ei/bgn/5475.htm> (accessed February 12, 2010).

¹⁵³ Sawyer, "Remove or Reform? A Case for (Restructuring) Chiefdom Governance in Post-Conflict Sierra Leone," 393–395.

cases.¹⁵⁴ One chief in the Bo district asserts that there is a “general ignorance of legal matters,” while another maintains that people “come to the Native Authority court because they have no respect for the [state] authorities. If people are not satisfied [with the verdict of the court], they go to the police.”¹⁵⁵ However, since SSR has focused on the formal sector, the following analysis is limited to that sector.

The capacity of the formal judicial sector, like that of the police, is limited. As of 2009, there were 19 magistrates and 13 prosecution lawyers to serve the country.¹⁵⁶ Magistrates are understaffed, lengthy delays to trials and slow appeals processes are common, defendants often lack legal representation and prisons are overcrowded with poor living conditions.¹⁵⁷ There is a shortage of trained judges and staff at the local magistrate courts, and many clerks are owed significant amounts of back pay. Insufficient infrastructure is also a major problem. The SLP maintains that the lack of capacity in the judicial sector hampers their efforts to combat crime, as the system cannot process or obtain convictions against the criminals they arrest.¹⁵⁸ The World Bank notes that significant progress has been made in building courtrooms and other facilities, but primarily in the major urban areas, leaving most of the magistrate courts with poor facilities.¹⁵⁹ In one case, eleven defendants convicted of treason in January 2005 had their appeal heard only in April 2008. While the appeals court overturned their convictions, the men were not released for another seven months. In another instance, a group of soldiers held without trial for four years were released in 2004, only after several had died in prison due to maltreatment and medical neglect.¹⁶⁰

¹⁵⁴ Pamela Dale, *Access to Justice in Sierra Leone: A Review of the Literature* (Washington: World Bank, 2008), 1–2.

¹⁵⁵ Baker, “Post-War Policing by Communities in Sierra Leone, Liberia, and Rwanda,” *Democracy and Security* 3, no. 2 (May 01, 2007): 225–226.

¹⁵⁶ Amnesty International Report 2009-Sierra Leone.

¹⁵⁷ Amnesty International Reports cited for 2004–2009.

¹⁵⁸ Peter Albrecht and Paul Jackson, *Security System Transformation in Sierra Leone*, 41.

¹⁵⁹ “Sierra Leone (December 2009).” U.S. Department of State.

¹⁶⁰ *Amnesty International Report 2009- Sierra Leone*; Amnesty International. *Amnesty International Report 2005- Sierra Leone*.

The judicial sector also suffers from political inference. In 2005, for instance, the Minister of Justice refused to file charges against three men accused of beating a newspaper editor to death. In other cases of press intimidation, however, the court released without charge Sarh Musa Yamba, the editor of the *Concord Times*, who had been arrested on the orders of the attorney general. Prior to the 2007 election, several political opponents, including Charles Margai of the newly formed People's Movement for Democratic Change (PMDC), were arrested and held.¹⁶¹ This anecdotal evidence suggests that the courts strive to maintain their independence but do not always succeed.¹⁶²

Freedom House's 2009 assessment gives a clear concise report, stating in part:

The judiciary has demonstrated a degree of independence, and a number of trials have been free and fair. However, corruption, poor salaries, and a lack of resources threaten to impede the courts' future effectiveness... Arbitrary arrests are common, as are lengthy pretrial detentions under harsh conditions. The local human rights organization Prison Watch reported in February 2008 that nearly half of all inmates had not yet been sentenced.¹⁶³

E. CONCLUSION

The entire security sector has demonstrated basic levels of capability, but also suffers from gaps in capability. While political interference in the judiciary is a concern, it, the SLP and RSLAF have demonstrated a desire to act in a non-political manner. The RSLAF deployment to UNAMID should be considered a good first step in building a competent peacekeeping force, but is still in its infancy. The inability to meet stated goals in force reduction demonstrates a lack of ability to manage internal reforms. While individual officers have shown signs of politicization, overall the force has not acted in a politically biased manner. The police, while performing well in the 2007 elections are

¹⁶¹ *Amnesty International Report 2007-Sierra Leone.*

¹⁶² *Amnesty International Report 2007- Sierra Leone* ; Amnesty International. *Amnesty International Report 2008- Sierra Leone.*

¹⁶³ Freedom House, *Sierra Leone- Freedom House Report 2009.*
<http://freedomhouse.org/template.cfm?page=22&year=2009&country=7699> (accessed January 19, 2010).

facing troubles policing the cities. Investigations into rape and drug trafficking also show that the SLP have a limited ability to perform these functions, but they are overwhelmed and are largely unable to properly investigate and produce charges. There is no sign that the government has used the police or military to forcibly suppress political dissidents, but they have attempted to use the judiciary to shut out political opponents. The overwhelming reliance on the informal justice sector means that the majority of the population lives outside the formal rule of law.

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IV. COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS AND CONCLUSION

A. OVERVIEW

This concluding chapter will be divided into two sections. Section one is a comparative analysis of the pre-conflict and post-security sector reform eras. The findings of this comparative analysis are used to evaluate the success of the SSR efforts in Sierra Leone in section two. The chapter concludes with recommendations for future post-conflict security sector building programs.

B. SECTION I: COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS

1. Military

The contemporary RSLAF has significantly broader capabilities and is less politicized than the SLA of the 1970s. In addition to the legacy missions of maintaining internal order and supporting the police, the RSLAF has added the abilities to deploy in support of peacekeeping missions and is incorporating itself into the regional security structure. The ability of the RSLAF to meet UN standards for peacekeeping deployments, while not an indicator of an ability to conduct high tempo operations, shows that the military has been able to demonstrate its ability to meet minimum requirements and to operate with multi-national forces. The navy also represents a new capability, having demonstrated effectiveness in controlling smuggling and illegal fishing in Sierra Leone's territorial waters, capabilities that were absent in its 1970s counterpart. Given that the current navy has less than two hundred more personnel than its earlier incarnation, and still less than three hundred overall, this can be considered one of the SSR programs biggest successes. That said, the navy is still underequipped and manned given the several hundred miles of coastline. Further, while the navy was able to respond to ferry accidents, there remains a need to fully develop a maritime disaster warning system to increase the effectiveness of its response to like incidents.

The conduct of the armed forces in supporting the police was comparable in the prelude to the 1967 and 2007 national elections: it performed its duties with restraint and in a generally non-political manner. Both militaries demonstrated the capability and willingness to operate under the limitations imposed by the civilian government during the run up to the elections, and in both cases the incumbent government lost the election. The responses to the outcome of the elections could hardly have been more different. In 1967 senior officers, midlevel officers, and enlisted soldiers each conducted successful coups d'état, as the SLA came apart at its organizational seams attempting to determine the make-up of the post-election government. In 2007 there was a peaceful turnover of power, with the military remaining in their barracks and not interfering in the process. The RSLAF remained loyal to the state and the government of the day. So far the RSLAF has been able to keep itself out of the political sphere, in stark contrast to SLA of 1967-1971. This performance in the elections notwithstanding, the 2009 Jane's assessment of weak state control over the security forces and the 2009 "DREAM TEAM" letter suggest worrying parallels between the RSLAF and SLA in terms of the nature of civilian control of the military. These indicate that some part of the RSLAF, perhaps small, is unhappy with the management of the President and Minister of Defense, and prepared to threaten direct intervention in politics to redressed perceived ethnic favoritism and generalized neglect. This does not bode well for the consolidation democracy in general, or democratic civilian control of the military in particular.

The RSLAF and SLA demonstrate similar capabilities to cope with public unrest when called upon to assist the police. Nevertheless, the RSLAF provides support under the MACP, which distinguishes it from the joint army-police units of the 1970s. The MACP clearly places the military under civilian control and lays out the limited situations under which the army may assist the police or other civilian agencies. However, military involvement in smuggling, internal dissent within the ranks, and levels of corruption are also similar for the two armed forces. The RSLAF's inability to stop smuggling or reduce high rates of violent crime parallel the legacy force and suggest that the military doesn't bring effective training and capability, so much as "boots on the ground" to the anti-smuggling and crime efforts.

The current size of the military (approx 10,000) is three to four times that of the SLA, and the government has made no progress toward its stated goals of downsizing the force. Although the military's share of GDP is larger than its counterparts in the region, the government has still been unable (or unwilling) to provide proper equipment and barracks for the military, as was the case with the SLA. The size of the present force does not mirror its capabilities or what is required for the region. The lack of resources and dedicated missions harkens back to the 1970s, suggesting that military corruption and the threat to civilian governance remains. The much larger size of the contemporary military may mean that threat is also larger.

2. Police

The police of the 1970s and the 2000s have similar capabilities in dealing with crime and public disturbances, their core mission. Effectiveness was marginal in both decades. The police have largely returned to their previous status as an apolitical force, but still suffer from corruption and a lack of capacity. Police reliance on RSLAF assistance through MACP indicates a distinct lack of capability in combating crime and is directly comparable to the joint police-army units in the 1970s. The SLP has reacted to public disturbances and riots in recent years somewhat more professionally than in the 1970s. Although there was an incident of police firing into a crowd in 2009, overall the post-conflict police have demonstrated more restraint than in the 1970s. However, recent riots have also demonstrated the limitations of the SLP in dealing with crowd control and show that they have much room for improvement, much as in the 1970s. The same can be said for efforts in both anti-smuggling and illegal mining. Neither the past, nor current SLP has been able to effectively combat smuggling or illegal diamond mining.

The current police force is less politicized than that of the 1970s. There is no current counterpart to the highly politicized ISU and GSU, and the rest of the force appears to be largely apolitical. However, the current SLP suffers from significant levels of corruption, and a lack of public confidence. Available data on these issues for the 1970s is less precise, but if contemporary scholarly assessments are to be taken at face value, the SLP has lost ground since the 1970s.

Performance of the police in the 1967 and 2007 general elections was broadly comparable, with performance slightly better in 2007. In both elections, the police took the lead in providing election security and maintenance of civil order, with the military providing support. While the Dove-Edwin commission lists several shortfalls of the police during the prelude to the elections, the incidents documented were limited in both scope and number and overall the police actions seem professional and largely apolitical. The same can be said for police effectiveness in the 2007 elections, based on the NEC and other reports. In both cases, police appeared to be largely apolitical, overseeing free and fair elections in which incumbents were defeated. The elections of 2007 were a major accomplishment for the police, but overall performance of the SLP is comparable to that of the 1970s, with no major improvements, and a worrying lack of capability in dealing with crime, smuggling and illegal mining.

3. Justice Sector

The state of the current justice sector is also comparable to that of the early 1970s. At times it asserts its independence, but suffers from a lack of capacity, both in personnel (court officials, judges and barristers) and infrastructure (poor prison conditions and buildings), as in the 1970s. The courts have been able to process some high profile cases, but are unable to conduct timely proceedings for most accused criminals and has been cited by the police as a limiting factor in their ability to combat crime. The court, both in the 1970s and presently has been able to carry out trials and render judgments that have been acknowledged by the international community to have been fair and impartial. While the court by the late 1970s had been brought to heel by the Stevens' administration, the court today more closely resembles its counterpart of the first half of the 1970s, during which it was largely able to assert its independence, despite interference.

C. SECTION II: CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Overall Effectiveness of Security Sector Reform

Measured against the UK's goals for security sector reform outlined in Chapter I, SSR in Sierra Leone has not been successful. The goals were to build strong institutions and security organizations that operated under democratic control with public accountability and strong judicial systems. Of the three parts of the security sector examined, the RSLAF has made the greatest gains, and has acquired capabilities that it did not possess in the 1970s, but still faces governance challenges. It is impossible to assess the benefits of SSR precisely, since assessment requires counterfactual assumptions about what the RSLAF would look like today in the absence of SSR. It is fairly safe to assume that with the war over, the military would have returned to its prewar state, especially if we assume aid and training programs generally included in a traditional UN peacekeeping operation. Thus, if the benefits of SSR are measured by the improvement of the post-war current security sector over the pre-war security sector, they are limited. Weak civilian control noted by Jane's and dissatisfaction with civilian authority suggested by the DREAM Team letter are exactly what SSR was supposed to prevent. The MACP is a positive example of police-military cooperation under civilian authority and a success in that it institutionalized the RSLAF's secondary mission of providing for internal stability, while remaining under democratic control. While the RSLAF has performed its MACP duties in a non-political manner to date, a return to the military instability of the 1970s cannot be ruled out. The RSLAF's dedication to the MACP program and the increased international and regional support for civilian electoral (if not necessarily democratic) regimes mitigate, but do not eliminate, the likelihood of increased military intervention in politics.¹⁶⁴ Still, the existing weaknesses in civilian

¹⁶⁴ ECOWAS and the AU have made concerted efforts over the two decades to address civil-military issues and have begun to suspend member states after coups and other un-democratic power changes. The recent example of ECOWAS' suspension of Niger is an example of this policy, as is the ECOWAS Mechanism for Conflict Prevention, Management and Resolution, Peace and Security that was formed in December 1997. The AU has taken a similar approach in forming its Peace and Security Council that stresses democratic changes of government and attempts to mediate internal grievances to strengthen democratic rule. The AU has further adopted ECOWAS' stance in addressing coups, and has formally backed its approach to Niger and suspended it as well. Please see the bibliography for complete citations of the ECOWAS and AU background documents.

control suggest that the SSR program largely failed to establish strong institutional control over the military, despite partial success in building military readiness.

In contrast, SSR in the police and justice sectors has had partial successes in institutionalizing accountability while largely failing in capability building. Both sectors are undermanned, lack capability to deal with increasing crime, and are riddled by corruption. However, the continuing need for RSLAF support indicates that SSR did not create sufficient capacity within the police force. The continuing shortage of prisons that meet basic standards, attacks by police on the press, charges brought on behalf of the ruling party against political opponents, and the minimal presence of the formal justice sector outside major urban areas are all shortcomings that SSR was supposed to, but did not, address.

The apolitical performance of the SLP, while comparable to the 1970s, once again simply represents a return to the past. Considering that the police reform programs were the first off the ground, with the police charter and a UK national acting as Inspector General of the Police for several years, the continuing lack of improvement in capability and endemic corruption make it difficult to ascertain what the benefits were of SSR over traditional programs. The proactive measures the police have been taking to reach out to the community can be viewed as a positive outcome from the SSR program, as one of the goals was to foster a sense of public confidence in the police, and outreach programs can be perceived as attempts at such. However, the analysis of the 1970s suggests the public had confidence in the police, without the need to use outreach programs suggesting that, to date, SSR has had difficulty fostering a positive public perception of the police. However, corruption and incapacity are problems SSR was supposed to, but did not, address.

Similarly, while maintaining significant independence, the courts today face political interference and lack capacity, much as they did in the 1970s. The number of magistrates and barristers is almost exactly the same as it was 40 years ago, while population size has doubled. Although the customary courts are recognized in the constitution alongside the formal justice sector, the failure of the formal justice sector to function outside of urban areas inhibits the spread of the rule of (constitutional) law. This

absence also diminishes the effectiveness of elected government and security forces, as it encourages citizens to rely on customary structures and creates a distance between them and their (national) government. The lack of capacity in the judiciary continues to impede criminal prosecutions, while government interference inhibits the conduct routine business and fosters popular perceptions that the courts are politically compromised and thus do not represent the people of the country or uphold the rule of law. Overall, the benefits of SSR to the judicial sector are minimal at best.

The British government estimated at the outset that complete SSR reform would take 10–50 years. Only ten have passed. Justice sector reform is ongoing, as are police and military training programs. However, the SSR program as a whole seems to have lost much of its urgency and intensity. While the international community is still involved in Sierra Leone, as evidenced by the continued, but smaller IMATT contribution, and Justice Sector development programs, this may be due to the transition to the Sierra Leone government the responsibility for maintaining and building on the reforms. This would be indicative of a lack of capacity or will at that level to maintaining the intensity and focus of SSR. In addition, and perhaps as a result, the most successful elements of SSR to date (building military capability under IMATT, and police commitment to civilian governance under the White Paper and the British Inspector General of the Police) are those that were the first to be undertaken. Thus, the level and nature of the gains to SSR are similar to those achieved by less ambition traditional post-conflict peacekeeping models elsewhere (e.g., Mozambique).¹⁶⁵

In light of the conclusion that SSR was not successful, this paper cannot recommend implementing SSR in future post-conflict states and instead to implement traditional stabilization programs that are not as intrusive. SSR does not focus on the underlying causes of conflict. Even with its focus on civilian governance, it primarily

¹⁶⁵ Martina Fisher provides a solid overview of differing reconstruction processes in: Martina Fischer, *Recovering from Violent Conflict: Regeneration and (Re-)integration as Elements of Peacebuilding*, (Berlin: Berghof Research Center for Constructive Conflict Management, 2004). The overall conclusion is that certain elements are necessary for successful war-peace transitions. Among the countries listed as successes, such as Mozambique, Bougainville, Somaliland and Lebanon, each has had differing levels of international involvement, but none has had a comprehensive SSR program implemented as in Sierra Leone. Of the seven keys to success Fischer lists, only one is directly addressed by SSR in Sierra Leone.

serves to strengthen the security sector creating, as in Sierra Leone, just as much room for coups and corruption as it does security for the population. Of the factors that Fischer lists which are common in relatively successful post-conflict states, such as Mozambique and Lebanon, the stated goals of SSR meet only one. Most of the rest require internal ownership by the host nation. In that light, the international community is quite limited in the positive contributions that it can make, other than providing specific support that the host nation requests.

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